

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BUENOS 05971 092156Z

63

ACTION ARA-20

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INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 5971

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJ: MENDOZA INTERVENTION MEASURE PASSES CONGRESS

REF: BA 5193

1. SUMMARY: CONGRESS HAS APPROVED GOA'S INTERVENTION MEASURE FOR MENDOZA PROVINCE. INTERVENTOR WILL PROBABLY BE APPOINTED NEXT WEEK. RATIONALE FOR FEDERAL INTERVENTION IS EXTREMELY PUZZLING, BOTH FROM STANDPOINT OF PRACTICAL POLITICAL REALITIES AND FROM THAT OF JURIDICAL NECESSITY. PRESIDENT WOULD SEEM TO HAVE NEEDLESSLY OPENED A NEW POLITICAL FRONT AT TIME WHEN SHE HAS MORE THAN ENOUGH OTHER PROBLEMS TO CONTEND WITH. END SUMMARY.

2. CHAMBR OF DEPUTIES EQRLY THIS MORNING (AUG 9) APPROVED GOVERNMENTS CALL FOR INTERVENTION OF MENDOZA PROVINCE AFTER BITTER DEBATE. MOST FREJULI DEPUTUES VOTED WITH GOVERNMENT WHILE MOST MEMBERS OF OPPOSITION PARTIES VOTED AGAINST (WE DO NOT YET HAVE COMPLETE TALLY). PERONIST DEPUTIES REPRESENTING LABOR WING WERE KNOWN TO BE OPPOSED TO MEASURE (WHICH UNDERCUTS POSITION OF ORTHODIZ PERONISTS IN MENDOZA, INCLUDING LABOR WING). HOWEVER UPON BEING INFORMED BY FREJULI BLOC LEADER FERNANDO PEDRINI THAT MEASURE HAD FULL SUPPORT OF

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BUENOS 05971 092156Z

MRS. PERON THEY ADHERED TO PRINCIPLE OF VERTICALITY AND VOTED

IN FAVOR.

3. UCR DEPUTIES VOTED AGAINST MEASURE. AS INDICATED IN BA 5193 UCR AT ONE POINT WAS WAVERING AS TO HOW BEST TO REACT. HAD MEASURE BEEN LIMITED TO INTERVENTION OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH THEY MIGHT HAVE DECIDED TO GO ALONG WITH IT. GOVERNMENT'S INSISTENCE THAT MEASURE WOULD NOT IN ANY WAY BE MODIFIED AND WOULD APPLY TO ALL THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT FORCED UCR INTO OPPOSITION. OTHERWISE NATIONAL UCR CONGRESSMEN WOULD HAVE BEEN PLACED IN POSITION OF APPROVING OUSTER OF THEIR FELLOW PARTY MEMBERS IN PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE.

4. MEASURE HAD OF COURSE ALREADY PASSED IN NATIONAL SENATE, WHERE VOTE WAS ALONG STRICT PARTISAN LINES. EVERY FREJULI SENATOR VOTED FOR EVERY OPPOSITION SENATOR VOTED AGAINST.

5. REAL PURPOSE OF INTERVENTION REMAINS OBSCURE. EMBOFFS DISCUSSED MATTER RECENTLY WITH FREJULI SENATOR TO WHOM IT HAD FALLEN TO INTRODUCE MEASURE IN SENATE AND FOUND HIM GRASPING AT STRAWS TO JUSTIFY INTERVENTION. INDEED HE FINALLY ADMITTED IT WAS PROBABLY A POLITICAL MISTAKE, FOR WHICH HE BLAMED INTERIOR MINISTER LLAIB. LATTER HAD BADLY ADVISED MRS. PERON HE SAID AND WOULD PROBABLY LOSE HIS JOB AS A RESULT; SENATOR WENT ON, HAVING ONCE INDICATED HER SUPPORT FOR MEASURE, MRS. PERON COULD NOT THEN RETRACT.

6. SENATOR MAY HAVE BEEN CORRECT IN INDICATING INTERIOR MINISTRY AS POINT OF ORIGIN. EMBASSY NOTES THAT HAD MRS. PERON REALLY COME TO CONCLUSION THAT MEASURE WAS ILL ADVISED SHE COULD HAVE WITHOUT RETRACTING AT LEAST PASSED WORD TO FREJULI CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS TO PERMIT MODIFICATIONS TO COME ABOUT AS RESULT OF NEGOTIATIONS IN CONGRESS. THIS WOULD HAVE PROBABLY AVOIDED CONFLICT WITH UCR. THAT SHE DID NOT DO SO SUGGESTS SHE BACKED MEASURE ALL THE WAY.

7. IN MENDOZA ITSSELF PROVINCIAL SENATE HAS REFUSED TO ACCEPT MARTINEZ BACA'S PLEA TO DROP IMPEACHMENT PROCEEDINGS. SINCE LEGISLATURE ITSELF WILL NOW BE INTERVENED, IMPEACHMENT PROCESS MAY NEVER REACH A VOTE. VICE GOVERNOR CARLOS MENDOZA HAS PRESENTED HIS OWN RESIGNATION--IN ORDER TO PAVE WAY FOR INTERVENTOR
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BUENOS 05971 092156Z

ACCORDING TO HIM. AT SAME TIME HE HAS BEEN FURIOUSLY FIRING PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS AND APPOINTING HIS OWN LABOR CRONIES. INTERVENTOR WILL THUS ARRIVE AND FIND HIMSELF SURROUNDED, AT LEAST INITIALLY BY RIGHT WING PERONISTS.

8. COMMENT: WHY PRESIDENT WOULD HAVE PUSHED THROUGH MEASURE WHICH COULD ONLY RESULT IN IRRITATING PERONIST RIGHT WING AS WELL AS OPPOSITION PARTIES AND PROVINCES (WHO ALWAYS REACT

NEGATIVELY INTERVENTION OF ONE OF THEIR NUMBER), IS QUESTION WHICH AT THIS POINT NO ONE CAN ANSWER. INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS IN PROVINCE DID NOT APPEAR ANYWHERE NEAR SERIOUS ENOUGH TO WARRANT MEASURE WITH SUCH OBVIOUS POLITICAL RISKS. ONE PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION IS THAT MRS. PERON TOOK STEP AS PART OF EFFORT TO BALANCE GROWING INFLUENCE OF PERONIST RIGHT WING ESPECIALLY OF THE UOM (TO WHICH VICE GOVERNOR BELONGS). IF SO SHE CHOSE POOR DEVICE. THERE WERE OTHER WAYS TO CURB POWER OF RIGHT WITHOUT AT SAME TIME ANTAGONIZING UCR AND OTHER SECTORS. AT A TIME WHEN THERE ARE GROWING PROBLEMS IN OTHER AREAS, SHE SEEMS NEEDLESSLY TO HAVE OPENED A NEW FRONT.

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